

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Amendments to the Specification are as follows:

Page 1, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

This application is related to pending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/965,806, filed on even date, titled "Combination Filter Element Support And Anti-Prefill Valve" and incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

On page 5, the first full paragraph has been amended as follows:

The unitary body 26 further includes a second section 34 which is coextensive with the first section 30 and seals with the end plate 17 by engaging the first end plate portion 20. Since the first section 30 and the second section 34 are unitary with a relatively large thickness, they provide a support for the filter element 12 which abuts and is urged against the unitary body 26 in a known way, such as for example, by a coil spring (not shown) at the upper end of the filter element 12. In the illustrated and preferred embodiment, the second section 34 has a frustoconical section which adds thickness and strength and directs the axial force exerted by the filter element 12 toward a sealing interface 35 with the first ~~panel~~ plate portion 20.